

the end of 1873 he relinquished his interest in the *Inangahua Herald*. He appears to have purchased an interest in the *Greymouth Evening Star* in 1873, although the date and precise nature of his interest is unclear. But he was already looking further afield than the West Coast. In April 1875 the first issue appeared of the *Patea Mail* in the town of Carlyle in the Taranaki Province. Was it coincidental that an election was to be called at the end of 1875 and that there would no longer be a seat for I vess in the Nelson Provincial Council when it was abolished at the end of 1876? The *Patea Mail* for 1875 is the second newspaper examined here to ascertain whether I vess established it mainly to assist his political ambitions.

The evidence from the *Patea Mail* is not as clearcut as that from the *Inangahua Herald*. After an editorial in the first issue with its conventional statements about the glowing future of the district and of the newspaper, I vess's name disappeared from its pages while he attended a sitting of the Provincial Council in Nelson. His absence lasted until June. There are some occasional mentions—the birth of a daughter to Mrs I vess, for instance (31 July 1875)—then in August the Carlyle Town Board election was reported, I vess being the second lowest polling candidate and consequently not elected (25 August 1875). Later issues regularly note I vess in various public capacities, but there is not the same purposeful currying of public favour as noted in the Reefton newspaper. But in early September there appeared a first hint of political ambition, in a letter to the editor signed 'Disgust'. In it the editor is exhorted to use his

utmost endeavours to represent to the electors (which our member [Atkinson, the Colonial Treasurer] thinks so easily gulled and blindfolded), the absolute necessity of returning a member at the next general election, whose interests should be so thoroughly identified with the district, that personal aggrandisement could not allure, from pledges made to the electors. (15 September 1875)

Not until November was the election issue raised again. An editorial advised electors that given the patent lack of interest in the Patea district shown by Atkinson, the present member, they should consider carefully whom to vote for (10 November 1875). A week later the editorial noted 'almost the certainty' of a local candidate opposing Atkinson (17 November 1875). From this date I vess was actively reported in the columns of the *Patea Mail*: he was elected to the Patea East Road Board, he asked questions at a public meeting about the use of a local public reserve, and he became a member of a committee to form a Patea Harbour Board—all this reported in two issues! (24 November, 1 December 1875). Only two weeks after, with the election to begin only a few days later, I vess declared his candidature after a Mr Maguire had declined. The issue where this was reported (18 December 1875) also contains a scathing editorial against Atkinson's performance as